



HOT SUPPLEMENTS!

As with many companies, one major pharmacy chain found itself overusing an installed laser printer for applications it was not designed to perform, spending more money on costly "label/form" combo paper every year than it spent on the laser printer, toner cartridges and maintenance put together! The opportunity was ripe for one VAR who understood the primary needs of the customer and the versatility of the Cognitive printer family.

The pharmacy had several goals for the project:

- Enable the laser printer duplex printing capability. The expensive label/form combo sheet prohibits duplex printing.
- Eliminate printer jams caused by the label portion of the label/form combo sheet.
- Help to prevent a costly incorrect prescription from leaving the pharmacy by printing the "script" tag before fulfilling the prescription, impossible with the label/form combo sheet.

A VAR proposed a thermal printing solution with the following characteristics:

- Built-in Ethernet capability
- Exceptional print quality (300 dpi) for small labels
- FLASH memory for graphics storage
- Compatible with PCL (printing language)

Two thermal printers were able to provide a cost-benefit that outweighed the modest initial expense. One thermal printer at the prescription receipt area prints identification barcodes and prescription tags, or scripts. Previously, the script would travel with the prescription as it is fulfilled, dispensed, input into the database, and then filed. With a Cognitive printer at the receipt area, the pharmacist enters the prescription into the database and immediately prints the script. As the pharmacist fills the prescription, a software program has the time to raise warning flags and prevent an incorrect prescription from being distributed to a patient. Although rare, incorrectly filled prescriptions can be dangerous to patients and the threat of litigation can be dangerous to the pharmacy! Some advantages of thermal printing are greater than they may first appear.

A second thermal printer prints pill bottle labels. Compatibility with PCL (Printer Control Language) was a must as this printer would be receive the same data previously sent to the laser printer. The solution was a Cognitive Easy Ethernet (e+) Del Sol™ with built-in Ethernet connection, enabling plug-and-play connectivity with the pharmacy's 10-Base-T network. Bundled inControl™ network printer management software displays graphical alerts on the Windows® 98 workstation at the receipt area when a printer is out of media. A handy illustration explains how to install the media and standard procedures use an intuitive and friendly language for common operations.

The pharmacist's VAR programmed a Data Direct™ Del Sol to accept the PCL information. Available with all Cognitive printers, this 1-2-3 data filter software resides in the printer memory and accepts data streams from any source, including other manufacturer's programming languages. Data Direct is suitable for a wide variety of environments and can complement or replace a vast array of more expensive printing technologies. VARs love Data Direct because it enables them to provide a unique and proprietary product. Customers love it because it provides a custom solution that fits exact requirements.

The Cognitive thermal printing solution: A) reduces costly and potentially dangerous errors by helping stop incorrect prescriptions from leaving the pharmacy. B) Saves money by reducing the media costs associated with laser combination forms. C) Enables the laser printers to print receipt and patient education forms using duplex bond paper, saving the pharmacy time and money.